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Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, questions relating to refugees, returnees and displaced persons and humanitarian questions

Assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted in compliance with General Assembly resolution 66/135 on assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa. It covers the period from 1 January 2011 to 31 May 2012 and updates the information contained in the report of the Secretary-General submitted at the sixty-sixth session of the Assembly (A/66/321). The current report has been coordinated by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and draws on information received from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the International Labour Organization, the United Nations Population Fund, UN-Women, the World Health Organization, the World Food Programme, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons. It is also based on reports from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Development Programme.

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I. Introduction

1. Africa[1] has been the stage of multiple displacement emergencies that have put the response capacity of the United Nations system to the test. In early 2011, the violent aftermath of the disputed elections in Côte d'Ivoire displaced more than 1.2 million people; violence and famine displaced hundreds of thousands of Somalis; and conflict in the border areas disputed by the Sudan and newly independent South Sudan drove almost 200,000 refugees into Ethiopia and South Sudan. Violence, political turmoil and drought in Mali displaced more than 350,000 people in the first six months of 2012, both within the country and across borders into Burkina Faso, Mauritania and the Niger.

2. At the end of 2011, Africa hosted some 2.7 million refugees, one quarter of the global refugee population, mostly from Somalia, the Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.[2] Prior to 2010, refugee numbers had been declining in Africa for nine consecutive years, but this trend reversed and by the end of 2011 the number of refugees had increased by more than half a million compared to the beginning of the year. With some 107,000 new asylum applications, South Africa received the highest number of asylum seekers worldwide.

3. At the end of 2011, an estimated 9.7 million people were internally displaced because of armed conflict, generalized violence and human rights violations in 21 countries in the region. This represents a reduction compared to the previous year, when there were 11.1 million internally displaced persons in sub-Saharan Africa. The Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia and the Sudan remained the countries with the highest number of internally displaced persons, while Côte d'Ivoire saw the highest incidence of new internal displacement.

4. Progress was achieved to bring closure to several of Africa's protracted refugee situations, namely those involving refugees from Angola, Liberia and Rwanda. In 2011, 236,000 refugees returned to their areas of origin, primarily in Côte d'Ivoire and the Sudan, and 1.7 million internally displaced persons returned, notably in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, South Sudan and Uganda.

5. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs reported that from January 2011 to 30 April 2012, $6.22 billion was received in response to 24 inter-agency humanitarian appeals for Africa. Significant funds were mobilized for the Côte d'Ivoire crisis and the drought in the Horn of Africa. The Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) contributed to the timely and predictable response to emergencies by providing more than $427.6 million to United Nations agencies in 30 countries in Africa. This figure represents 63.4 per cent of the global funding provided by the CERF in this period. The main recipients were humanitarian operations in Somalia ($53 million), Ethiopia ($50.5 million) and South Sudan ($42.8 million). Of this $427.6 million, $279.3 million were rapid response grants and $148.3 million were underfunded grants.

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[1] In the present report, Africa refers to sub-Saharan Africa.

[2] Statistics on refugees, asylum seekers and returnees usually refer to numbers compiled by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees as of January 2012. Statistics on internally displaced people are estimates provided by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre's *Internal Displacement: Global Overview of Trends and Developments in 2011*, as well as estimates collated by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

II. Regional overviews

A. East Africa and the Horn of Africa

Sudan

6. The January 2011 referendum on the future of South Sudan and its subsequent declaration of independence marked the working environment for the United Nations in the Sudan. Lack of agreement on outstanding issues following the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, such as the sharing of oil revenues and border demarcation, led to violence in the second half of 2011, sending refugees into Ethiopia and South Sudan.

7. In early 2012, the Sudan and South Sudan negotiated the "four freedoms", including freedom of movement and residence for nationals of the other State; however, the agreement was never signed. Pending a final agreement establishing a legal framework allowing South Sudanese in the Sudan and Sudanese in South Sudan to regularize their stay, the United Nations continued negotiating modalities for South Sudanese to regularize their stay or return. Humanitarian organizations have also scaled up their presence in key areas of return in case of a sudden increase in arrivals.

8. With more than 500,000 nationals in exile, the Sudan remains the second main African country of origin, after Somalia. The Sudan also has an estimated 2.2 million internally displaced persons, of whom 1.9 million are in Darfur. The humanitarian country team prepared a durable solutions framework to support returnees and communities of return in Darfur. In 2011, an estimated 140,000 internally displaced persons returned to their areas of origin in Darfur.

9. The security situation and the degree of access by humanitarian organizations varied by region. In Darfur, the general trend has been a reduction in violence. Nonetheless, pockets of insecurity remained in areas under control of rebel movements, where fighting continued. Impunity and the lack of the rule of law were serious obstacles to curbing insecurity stemming from banditry and common crime. A total of 33 kidnappings of humanitarian staff were reported in Darfur in 2011, but only one case was prosecuted.

10. Following the outbreak of violence and displacement in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile States, humanitarian organizations faced serious access constraints. In February 2012, the United Nations, the African Union and the Arab League presented a proposal for delivery of aid to civilians in both states. The Government of the Sudan accepted the tripartite agreement with conditions, in late June. By then the rainy season was well under way, making the access to affected areas extremely difficult.

South Sudan

11. During 2011, some 38,000 South Sudanese returned from the Sudan. By June 2012, more than 160,000 refugees from Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile had fled to South Sudan, triggering a large-scale humanitarian emergency. While South Sudan does not enforce an encampment policy, most of the refugees have moved away from the border to refugee settlements. A group of some 50,000, however, decided to remain in Yida, close to the border, and this has raised serious protection

concerns. South Sudan also hosted some 23,000 refugees from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Central African Republic, many of whom fled the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA).

12. The takeover of the Abyei area by Sudanese troops in May 2011 displaced some 110,000 people into Warrap State, where they continued to receive humanitarian aid, as prospects for return have remained dim.

13. Inter-communal violence also plagued South Sudan. Large-scale retributive attacks affected hundreds of thousands of people in Lakes, Warrap, Unity and Blue Nile States, while inter-communal fighting in Jonglei State displaced some 63,000 people. In January 2012, a total of 170,000 people had been affected and received humanitarian assistance.

14. Food security has deteriorated since late last year. In February 2012, the World Food Programme (WFP) declared a level III emergency for South Sudan and pre-positioned some 55,000 metric tons of emergency food across the country.

15. Insecurity, the lack of roads and deficient infrastructure hampered access by humanitarian organizations. During the reporting period, more than 150 security incidents were reported involving interference, looting, diversion of aid, or the occupation of humanitarian premises by State and non-State actors.

Somalia

16. While the crisis that hit Somalia in 2011 was generally attributed to drought, other contributing factors included ongoing conflict, violence and restrictions on aid organizations to operate in militia-controlled areas. More than 300,000 Somalis fled during the year, mostly to Ethiopia and Kenya, bringing the total of Somali refugees worldwide to over 1 million. With some 1.36 million internally displaced persons, it is estimated that almost one third of Somalia's population of 7.5 million has been displaced.

17. As a result of rainfall, negotiated access to conflict areas, and intensification of the coordinated relief effort, the number of people in need of humanitarian aid dropped from 4 million in 2011 to 2.3 million at the end of April 2012. By February 2012, famine conditions no longer prevailed in Somalia. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) strengthened their partnership to ensure long-term livelihood support, in particular for returning internally displaced persons.

18. While the conditions enabling the delivery of aid in Mogadishu have improved, access to other parts of south and central Somalia remained challenging. A new post-distribution monitoring system has yielded positive results, but constraints continued and included diversion of aid and demands for payment.

Ethiopia

19. By the end of 2011, Ethiopia hosted nearly 289,000 refugees, representing an increase of over 300 per cent compared to 2008. Ethiopia is now hosting the third largest refugee population in Africa, following Kenya and Chad. Most of the refugees are from Eritrea, Somalia and the Sudan.

20. In 2011, Ethiopia received more than 19,000 Sudanese refugees, mostly from Blue Nile State, who crossed the border into western Ethiopia. The country also received more than 101,000 Somali refugees, many in extremely weakened conditions owing to famine and the hardships of the journey. While the Government allocated land for three additional camps in the Dollo Ado region and invited humanitarian actors to scale up their programmes, the influx of more than 500 refugees per day overwhelmed the response capacity. Initially, infant mortality and acute malnutrition rates were extremely high. Although the situation was eventually brought under control, in February 2012, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Real-Time Evaluation of the Humanitarian Response to the Horn of Africa Drought Crisis concluded that given the United Nations analysis of the situation inside Somalia, a more robust contingency operation to respond to an influx of refugees should have been in place.

Kenya

21. With more than 566,000 refugees, Kenya is the main refugee-hosting country in Africa and the fourth major hosting country worldwide. From 2009 to 2011, some 374,000 Somali refugees arrived in Kenya, stretching the capacity of the Dadaab refugee camps. During 2011, many of the new arrivals remained in unsanitary conditions in the outskirts of the existing sites until they could be transferred to new locations.

22. The security situation in the Dadaab area deteriorated significantly towards the end of 2011 and remains tense. There were 5 Kenyan policemen who were killed and 16 have been injured by improvised explosive devices while on duty in Dadaab. Leaders from the refugee communities have been targeted and killed, and aid workers kidnapped. This has led to restrictions on the movement of aid workers, such as the requirement to use police escort. Nonetheless, the delivery of basic services, including the provision of food and water, health and education, continued as a result of a business continuity plan that had been drawn up by humanitarian organizations and the refugee leadership.

23. In north-western Kenya, refugees are hosted in the Kakuma refugee camp, which has almost reached its maximum capacity of 100,000 people, with a steady increase of new arrivals. While the majority of the refugees in the camp were Somalis, most recent new arrivals were coming from South Sudan.

24. There were an estimated 250,000 internally displaced persons in Kenya, mostly as a result of the 2007 post-election violence, which at its peak had displaced some 650,000 people.

Uganda

25. By the end of 2011, most of the 1.84 million internally displaced persons who had been displaced by the fighting between the Ugandan military and the LRA had returned to their areas of origin, leaving some 30,000 people in four camps or in a transit centre. Of the total of 251 internally displaced person camps, 247 have been closed, and the land has been cleared, rehabilitated and returned to the owners. UNHCR closed its internally displaced person operation, and protection monitoring is now carried out by the Ugandan Human Rights Commission, with support from UNHCR.

26. At the beginning of 2012, Uganda hosted some 163,000 refugees, mostly from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. During the first six months of the year, more than 30,000 refugees arrived in Uganda, fleeing fighting and human rights abuses in North Kivu in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. During that period, Uganda also received more than 2,400 asylum requests from South Sudanese and Sudanese nationals. Of these, 67 per cent have been recognized as refugees.

B. Central Africa and the Great Lakes

Chad

27. By the end of 2011, Chad hosted more than 366,000 refugees, mostly from Darfur (the Sudan) and the Central African Republic.

28. There were also an estimated 126,000 internally displaced persons, as well as 56,000 returnees. While according to the Chadian authorities, more internally displaced persons were willing to return, the lack of basic social services and the absence of the rule of law and a functioning justice system prevented many from doing so. In the reporting period, the World Health Organization (WHO) supported health centres in six return areas with basic equipment and medical supplies and covered the costs of vaccination campaigns. There is, however, a need to strengthen basic services, in particular the provision of potable water, education and health, and to ensure access to livelihood opportunities.

29. Since the withdrawal of the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT) at the end of 2010, the Government has assumed full responsibility for the protection of civilians and the security of humanitarian actors. Arrangements have been implemented to improve security conditions in the east and south, with the deployment of additional national police, gendarmerie and the United Nations-trained Détachement Intégré de Sécurité. During the reporting period, access to displaced people was increased, particularly in eastern Chad, owing to improved security conditions.

Central African Republic

30. The Central African Republic continued to face widespread displacement, with more than 105,000 internally displaced persons, including some 22,000 newly displaced by attacks of the LRA. In addition, the country hosts nearly 20,000 refugees and asylum seekers, mostly from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. An estimated 9,000 refugees from the Central African Republic returned home from Cameroon and Chad, but some 160,000 remain in exile.

31. Access to displaced populations remained a major challenge in several parts of the country, due to an increase in banditry and fighting among armed groups. Attacks on aid workers resulted in the suspension of humanitarian activities in some regions. The Economic Community of Central African States established the Mission for the consolidation of peace in the Central African Republic, which helped to ensure security for a number of internally displaced person and refugee sites in the country.

32. Recently brokered ceasefire arrangements in the north presented an opportunity for recovery, with thousands of displaced people beginning to return to their villages.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

33. The steady deterioration of the security situation in the east resulted in continued displacement both internally and into Rwanda and Uganda. At the end of 2011, there were more than 491,000 Congolese refugees worldwide, most of them in the region, and over 1.7 million Congolese were internally displaced. North and South Kivu were the provinces most affected. In the north-eastern Orientale province, attacks by the LRA displaced a total of 350,000 people in the Haut- and Bas-Uélé Districts.

34. Between mid-2010 and mid-2011, an estimated 800,000 people returned to their villages, but few did so in the second half of the year because of growing insecurity and uncertainty related to the elections. Sexual and gender-based violence remained one of the most critical protection concerns, in particular in the east. For 2011, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) reported more than 8,900 cases of rape in the Kivus and Orientale provinces alone. Under the comprehensive inter-agency strategy to combat sexual and gender-based violence, activities have been implemented to: (a) improve medical and legal services for victims; (b) address the root causes of sexual violence through changing attitudes towards women and their role in the family and society; and (c) improve economic opportunities for women, including survivors of sexual and gender-based violence who were at risk of social exclusion. Nonetheless, a culture of permissiveness and impunity in which military and civilian perpetrators act remained an obstacle to fighting sexual and gender-based violence.

United Republic of Tanzania

35. The United Republic of Tanzania hosted close to 132,000 refugees during the reporting period, mostly from Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The majority have been living in the Mtabila and Nyarugusu refugee camps, in the north-western part of the country. The Government has announced the closure of Mtabila, home to some 38,000 Burundian refugees, now set for December 2012. A joint interview exercise was conducted by the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania and UNHCR to determine the need of those refugees for continued international protection. While a small percentage were deemed to be in need of continued international protection, the vast majority were found not to be in such need and will have their refugee status ceased by the Tanzanian Government, after which they will fall under domestic immigration legislation.

36. Some 162,300 former Burundian refugees are being naturalized as Tanzanian citizens. Initially, the newly naturalized Tanzanians were to be relocated, but owing to several constraints, including financial, the Government has halted the relocation programme pending further review.

C. Southern Africa

37. Most countries in the southern Africa region continued to be affected by mixed migratory movements. In 2011, the number of refugees and asylum seekers in Mozambique had increased by 73 per cent compared to the previous year. The majority of the new arrivals were from Ethiopia and Somalia, and many arrived in a state of exhaustion and were malnourished. The influx stretched the facilities in the Maratane camp, and the CERF made additional funds available to help the United

Nations country team respond to the emergency. WFP responded immediately, including by providing supplementary feeding.

38. With some 107,000 new asylum claims, representing 50 per cent fewer than the previous year, South Africa still received the highest number of asylum applications in 2011. Almost half the claims were presented by Zimbabwean nationals. In 2011, more than 6,800 asylum seekers were recognized as refugees in South Africa, the majority Somalis and Ethiopians. Deportation of Zimbabwean nationals resumed in October. While the Government implemented some of the recommendations of the Protection Working Group to ensure that the deportations were carried out as humanely as possible, concerns remained in particular with regard to unaccompanied minors.

D. West Africa

39. During the reporting period, West Africa was the scene of two major displacement emergencies: at the peak of the crisis, post-election violence in Côte d'Ivoire displaced an estimated 1 million people, both internally and across the border, mainly to Liberia. In January 2012, drought compounded by violence in northern Mali and political turmoil resulted in the movement of close to 200,000 refugees into Burkina Faso, Mauritania and the Niger, as well as the internal displacement of more than 150,000 people.

40. The Governments of Ghana, Guinea, Liberia and Togo recognized the Ivorian refugees on a prima facie basis. In Liberia, a large-scale emergency programme was established to assist the refugees in host communities and several refugee camps. By the end of 2011, more than 135,000 refugees and 467,000 internally displaced persons had returned home since the end of the hostilities in May 2011. At the end of the reporting period, there were still 127,000 internally displaced persons in Côte d'Ivoire and 58,000 Ivorian refugees in Liberia. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) supported a back-to-school campaign that reached 1 million children.

41. WFP carried out a food security assessment and warned that in the area most affected by the displacement crisis, some 60 per cent of the households remained food insecure.

III. Humanitarian response and inter-agency cooperation

A. Promotion of international protection principles

42. The emergencies in West Africa and the East and Horn of Africa showed that the principle of non-refoulement, the cornerstone of refugee protection, remained widely respected. Nonetheless, some incidents of forced returns and border closures in Africa raised concern.

43. Many countries in Africa maintain an encampment policy, barring refugees and asylum seekers from living outside designated areas, usually refugee camps. A good example offering refugees an alternative to long-term dependency was found in Ethiopia, where an "out-of-camp" policy allowed Eritrean refugees who could

financially support themselves to live outside the camps. The Government of Ethiopia added educational scholarships to this programme.

44. During the reporting period, the inter-agency Protection Standby Capacity Project (ProCap) hosted by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs deployed 10 Senior Protection Officers to various United Nations organizations that assisted displaced people in Africa. They provided expertise in the planning, coordination and implementation of the protection response in Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Malawi, Namibia, Somalia and the Sudan.

Strengthening of national refugee protection

45. Activities to strengthen normative and institutional frameworks, ensure proper functioning of asylum systems, and reinforce national capacities to handle the growing numbers of refugees and asylum seekers, including in mixed migration movements, have continued in almost all countries in Africa. The quality and sustainability of government refugee status determination procedures varied during the reporting period. In Djibouti, Eritrea and South Sudan, UNHCR assumed full responsibility for refugee status determination, while in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Sierra Leone, joint refugee status determination procedures were in place. The overall number of pending asylum cases in Africa grew from 311,300 people at the end of 2010 to some 366,600 at the end of 2011. National asylum capacities remained stretched, and the large number of people entering the asylum system in the context of mixed migration movements negatively affected the quality of refugee status determination procedures.

46. The newly independent State of South Sudan was almost immediately faced with a refugee emergency, without having legal or normative frameworks in place. While refugees from the Sudan were admitted, efforts were under way in Juba to draft and enact a refugee law. The Refugee Act is expected to be approved soon, and government capacity to issue refugee identity document cards, and birth, marriage and death certificates would benefit from further strengthening.

Registration and documentation

47. Registration upon arrival is crucial to identify refugees and their needs, as well as possible security threats. During the reporting period, emergency registration capacity was set up for refugees from Côte d'Ivoire in Liberia and Ghana; from the Democratic Republic of the Congo in Rwanda and Uganda; from Somalia in Ethiopia and Kenya; from the Sudan in Ethiopia and South Sudan; and from Mali in Burkina Faso, Mauritania and the Niger. Once emergency registration has taken place, a more detailed and individual registration process is carried out, to ensure a comprehensive picture of the refugee population, its needs and profile.

48. Worldwide, during 2011, 51 per cent of newborn refugees in camps and 89 per cent of refugee babies in urban settings received a birth certificate, compared to 46 per cent in camps and 49 per cent in urban environments in 2009. Birth registration is a first step towards recognizing a person before the law and preventing statelessness. It is also crucial to mitigate protection risks, including forced recruitment, trafficking and early marriages, and to ensure that a child has access to health care, education and other services.

49. In Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya, measures that had been introduced to make the birth registration process more efficient, including mobile registration units, resulted in an increase in registration from 48 per cent of newborns in 2010 to 80 per cent in 2011. Impediments to improving access to birth registration in Africa included lack of registration facilities and dedicated staff, lack of information, and high fees. At an intergovernmental ministerial-level meeting in December 2011, facilitated by UNHCR, on the occasion of the sixtieth anniversary of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the fiftieth anniversary of the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, the Governments of the Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Namibia, Rwanda and South Africa pledged to improve refugees' access to birth registration.

Promotion of the human rights of internally displaced persons

50. The year 2012 marked the twentieth anniversary of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons. During these two decades, progress has been made to improve the protection of internally displaced persons, and the adoption in 2009 of the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa, the Kampala Convention, was a legal milestone. By the end of May 2012, 37 of the 54 African Union members had signed the Kampala Convention and 13 had ratified the instrument. Fifteen ratifications are needed for the Convention to enter into force. The Global Protection Cluster has been supporting the African Union Commission in preparing a draft model law to help States to transpose the provisions of the Convention into national law. During the reporting period, Angola and Liberia prepared legislation based on the 1998 Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, as did Kenya.

51. The Special Rapporteur focused much of his work on the need to strengthen assistance, protection and durable solutions for the majority of internally displaced persons living outside camps.

Statelessness

52. In 2011, the fiftieth anniversary of the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness was commemorated by promoting greater awareness of statelessness and action to address it. At the intergovernmental ministerial-level meeting, African States expressed unprecedented commitment to prevent and reduce statelessness and to identify and protect stateless people. There were 22 statelessness-related pledges made by African States, including 11 to accede to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and 15 to accede to the 1961 Convention. During the reporting period, Nigeria, Benin and Burkina Faso signed one or both Conventions.

53. Other commitments included improving access to civil registration and documentation, reforming nationality laws to prevent and reduce statelessness, and undertaking studies and raising awareness of statelessness.

54. A growing number of States recognized the importance of including safeguards in nationality laws to avoid statelessness. The new Constitution and Citizenship and Immigration Law in Kenya set a good example by incorporating the principle of equality between men and women in all matters relating to nationality, granting of nationality to foundlings, and guaranteeing that residence abroad is not a ground for loss of citizenship.

55. State succession is one of the situations most likely to create statelessness. In South Sudan, UNHCR provided technical advice on the drafting of the Constitution and citizenship legislation and supported the adoption of laws which largely prevented statelessness from occurring when the country became independent. International actors worked with the Governments of the Sudan and South Sudan to ensure that people of South Sudanese origin in the Sudan and returnees have access to identity documentation proving their citizenship. Despite these efforts, concerns remained regarding the status of people of South Sudanese origin who reside in the Sudan and of Sudanese residing in South Sudan. Many do not have documentation to prove their nationality, and individuals with links to both States, including those of mixed origin or people from border or disputed areas, may encounter difficulty proving their nationality, and remain at risk of statelessness.

Security of people of concern and staff safety

56. The upsurge of conflict and humanitarian crises in Africa has not only increased the number of refugees and internally displaced persons, but also the risks of forced recruitment, sexual and gender-based violence and targeted attacks on civilians. In many operations, access to refugees and internally displaced persons was restricted owing to the volatile security situation or direct threats to aid workers. In Kenya, two refugee leaders who helped maintain peace and safety in the Dadaab refugee complex were murdered. In North Kivu in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, armed groups invaded internally displaced person camps, where they tortured and killed people who refused to submit to forced labour imposed by one of the militias. Ongoing violence hindered humanitarian access to the camps, and only 8 internally displaced person camps out of 31 in North Kivu were accessible to humanitarian workers without military escort. In South Sudan, the proximity to the border of some 50,000 Sudanese refugees remained a concern, exposing refugees and humanitarian workers to the spillover effects of the conflict, including aerial bombardments.

57. Economic hardship and competition over resources led to xenophobia in several areas. In Malawi, shops and other small businesses set up mostly by Rwandan refugees outside the Dzaleka camp were attacked and looted, with the local business community demanding that the Government put an end to businesses set up outside the refugee camp.

58. United Nations peacekeepers played a key role in strengthening the rule of law and the protection of civilians in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Sudan and South Sudan. In Jonglei in South Sudan, the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS) stationed platoons in several villages that hosted people who had been displaced by the inter-communal violence and organized patrols in displacement areas. In Côte d'Ivoire, the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) peacekeepers came under attack during the violent aftermath of the disputed elections, after the Security Council in its resolution 1975 (2011) reiterated that UNOCI could use "all necessary measures" in its mandate to protect civilians under imminent threat of attack.

59. Of the 35 United Nations personnel killed in 2011, 26 died in Africa. In the attack on the UN House in Abuja, Nigeria, 13 colleagues perished. South Sudan, Somalia and Darfur (the Sudan) were among the most dangerous places for humanitarian workers and peacekeepers during the reporting period.

Prevention of and response to sexual and gender-based violence

60. UNFPA helped strengthen the capacity of health-care staff to identify, prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based violence in Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Republic of Congo, Kenya, Liberia, Somalia, South Sudan, the Sudan and Uganda. Health-care staff were trained in the treatment of rape survivors and in referral pathways, both medical and legal. Training in the prevention and treatment of rape and other incidents of sexual and gender-based violence was provided to the Ghana Police, the Ghana Refugee Board and neighbourhood security watch wardens in refugee camps. Enhancing the capacity of national partners in employing the Gender-based Violence Information Management System to collect and manage data on sexual and gender-based violence in Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Somalia, South Sudan and the Sudan has been a key strategic priority. UNFPA supported the construction, rehabilitation and equipment of women's centres in internally displaced person camps in Chad, Guinea, Liberia, Somalia and the Sudan.

61. In many areas the struggle against sexual and gender-based violence was seriously hindered by impunity, inadequate law enforcement and lack of judicial capacity, which allowed perpetrators to escape justice. In the north of the Republic of the Congo, 90 cases of sexual and gender-based violence were reported in 2011, including 67 involving children. None of the cases had been presented in court by the end of the year. In Djibouti, however, the introduction of a mobile court system ensured that more perpetrators were brought to justice. This, together with a more coordinated response and the installation of solar street lights, helped reduce incidents of sexual and gender-based violence in the Ali Addeh refugee camp. Solar street lights were also installed in some of the refugee camps in Ethiopia.

Protection of people with special needs, including women, children, the elderly and persons with disabilities

62. In 2011, in Africa, 51 per cent of refugees and asylum seekers were women and girls. On average, 47 per cent of refugees were under the age of 18, and 5 per cent were older than 60. There has been a notable increase in the number of displaced unaccompanied minors, in particular in the East and Horn of Africa. Almost half of all unaccompanied minors worldwide were registered in Kenya (14,000), with Kakuma nearly doubling its population of unaccompanied minors, from 2,260 at the beginning of 2011 to 4,245 at the end of the year. More than 7,000 unaccompanied minors, mostly of Somali and Eritrean origin, were registered in the different refugee camps in Ethiopia.

63. Unaccompanied and separated children should undergo an individual best-interest-determination process, to identify the best interim care and long-term solution for them. Despite the increase of the overall number of best-interest-determination processes carried out, the percentage of children who underwent such a process dropped. In Kenya, only 1 per cent of the unaccompanied minors underwent a best-interest-determination process, related for the most part to finding a durable solution. Lack of capacity and resources were cited as obstacles to conducting more best-interest-determination processes in the Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Kenya and Malawi.

B. Delivery of assistance and special needs

Food

64. At the beginning of 2012, some 1.9 million refugees, 1.2 million internally displaced persons and one half million returnees in 24 African countries depended on food assistance delivered by WFP. Food assistance includes general food distributions, targeted supplementary feeding, school meals, food for work projects, and programmes to increase resilience in food insecure areas. An example can be found in the Jijiga region in Ethiopia, where women from the refugee camp and the host community received beehives for the production of honey.

65. In recent years, the international humanitarian community moved from the traditional approach of providing in-kind food to the use of a cash-and-voucher system. This allowed beneficiaries more choice and control of how to meet their needs. Cash and vouchers for food were used in situations where food was available in the local market, but not accessible to the poorest. In Dadaab and Kakuma, food vouchers were given to women and young children to buy fresh products and milk. WFP and UNHCR are currently undertaking a project to assess the impact of the use of the cash-and-vouchers system on the situation of protection of beneficiaries.

Public health and HIV/AIDS

66. Public health activities and access to health services for refugees, internally displaced persons and returnees remained key protection components. During the reporting period, malnutrition, measles, diarrhoea, respiratory tract infections and malaria remained the five main causes of death for refugee and internally displaced person children under the age of 5 in Africa. In a positive development, a growing number of refugees gained access to voluntary health insurance schemes in West Africa and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in particular in urban areas.

67. In 2011, most of the newly displaced refugees came from food insecure areas in Mali, Somalia and the Sudan. Many of them were in poor health when they arrived in the neighbouring countries. Up to two thirds of arriving Somali children in Dollo Ado, in Ethiopia, were acutely malnourished. In one camp, the daily mortality rate exceeded 7 per 10,000 people. Nutrition and health services, including massive measles and polio vaccination campaigns, were scaled up and community outreach improved. As a result, the mortality rate of children under the age of 5 was brought down well below the emergency threshold. Global acute malnutrition rates in the camps in Dollo Ado were reduced from more than 50 per cent in 2011 to 15 per cent in June 2012.

68. Agencies included activities to raise awareness about HIV and to mitigate its proliferation in the overall humanitarian response from the onset of emergencies. Special nutritional care for HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis patients, as well as for women in preventing mother-to-child-transmission care, is increasingly integrated in routine supplementary nutrition schemes for refugees and internally displaced persons, including in protracted displacement situations in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia, and during the Horn of Africa crisis.

69. In Côte d'Ivoire, WFP assisted internally displaced persons living with HIV during the 2011 emergency, providing supplementary food to some 5,000

malnourished patients who were undergoing antiretroviral therapy in areas most affected by displacement. In Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania, community and home-care programmes offering extended support to extremely vulnerable individuals assured that households of refugees and internally displaced persons living with HIV had access to a balanced food basket. All humanitarian response programmes continued to promote the inclusion of refugees and internally displaced persons in national HIV programmes, as more than half of the countries have not yet done this.

70. Scientific progress, the reduction of financial barriers to treatment and improved advocacy have resulted in more opportunities for displaced people and returnees to have access to antiretroviral therapy. By the end of 2011, 93 per cent of refugees known to be living with HIV or AIDS in Africa had access to antiretroviral therapy at a level similar to that of the surrounding population.

Education

71. According to UNICEF, fewer than 9 out of 10 children complete primary school in developing countries, and in the least developed countries more than 1 in 5 children lack access to primary education. UNHCR estimated that a quarter of refugee children did not have access to primary education and that only 1 out of 5 refugee youngsters was enrolled in secondary education. Challenges included the lack of basic infrastructures, equipment, and qualified teachers. Poverty often prevented parents from covering costs for fees or uniforms. Retention particularly affected girls, who were prevented from going to school because of multiple household responsibilities or early marriage.

72. In 2011, UNHCR launched an education strategy to ensure that more displaced children have access to quality primary and secondary education in safe learning environments. Priority countries included Chad, Ethiopia, Kenya, South Sudan, the Sudan and Uganda. Projects in refugee and internally displaced person camps and host communities in Chad, eastern Sudan, Ethiopia and Kenya introduced family solar lamps or torches, which allowed children to study after dark.

73. The Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative offers scholarships to refugees to pursue a university education. In 2011, some 1,680 students benefited from those scholarships in 40 countries, mostly in Africa.

Livelihood opportunities

74. Although at the onset of displacement emergencies, most host communities were willing to share their resources with new arrivals, the long-term presence of displaced people often put a tremendous strain on existing means and facilities, including natural resources such as water and firewood. Encouraging the self-reliance of displaced people by creating livelihood opportunities not only curbed the cost of assistance, it also helped foster more harmonious relations with host communities. Furthermore, self-reliance has been critical for achieving durable solutions.

75. Involving host communities in programmes for displaced people has become essential to maintain a favourable protection environment. While the refugee community regularly received food rations, the host community in villages surrounding the refugee camps in Dadaab was also facing diminishing resources. In

2011, WFP addressed the growing need of the local communities through Food for Assets projects in an area of 45 km around the refugee camps. These projects sought to mitigate the effects of unreliable rainfall, creating assets for the host community and improving their livelihoods. The main activities were related to supporting the harvest, storage, and sale of farm produce, as well as maintaining rainwater harvesting structures.

76. In West Africa, the International Labour Organization carried out a livelihood programme for refugees who have opted for local integration in 14 countries. The projects included market and feasibility surveys, training and financing of microprojects. Refugee women in Senegal and the Gambia benefited from gardening and agricultural projects, which taught them about combining agriculture and husbandry, allowing them to produce organic fertilizer and biogas.

C. Ending forced displacement

77. When positive changes of a fundamental and durable nature have taken place in a refugee's country of origin, and it is recognized that the causes of flight no longer exist, both the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1969 Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa provide for the formal cessation of refugee status. At the end of 2011, UNHCR recommended ceasing, as of 30 June 2012, the refugee status of Angolans who had fled their country between 1961 and 2002, and of Liberian refugees who had escaped the civil wars between 1989 and 2003. Refugee status for Rwandans who fled their country before 1998 will cease as of 30 June 2013. Leading up to the cessation, comprehensive strategies have been implemented in an effort to find a durable solution for as many refugees as possible through voluntary repatriation or local integration.

78. While the majority of Angolan refugees have returned to Angola since the signing of the peace accords in 2002, by the end of 2011, some 130,000 remained in exile. Voluntary repatriation resumed during 2011, and some 22,000 refugees had returned by the end of June 2012, with 26,000 additional registered for repatriation. Some 70,000 opted for local integration, primarily in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Zambia. At the intergovernmental ministerial-level meeting, the Government of Zambia pledged to support the local integration of up to 10,000 Angolan refugees with strong ties to their host communities.

79. Between 2004 and 2011, more than 169,000 Liberian refugees returned to Liberia and at the end of 2011, some 67,000 remained in exile, for the most part in West Africa. Some 25,000 have expressed the intention to return, 12,400 wished to remain in their country of asylum and 17,000 remained undecided. Local integration has been greatly facilitated by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Protocol relating to Free Movement of Persons, Residence and Establishment, which allowed former Liberian refugees to reside and work in any ECOWAS member State.

80. The Government of Gabon invoked cessation of refugee status for refugees from the Republic of the Congo, effective as of 13 July 2011. This affected some 7,500 people, of whom some 6,500 will be granted residency permits. At the end of the year, more than 3,500 had already received their permit.

81. In eastern Sudan, UNHCR, the United Nations Development Programme and the World Bank launched the Transitional Solutions Initiative to support the local integration of some 68,000 long-staying Eritrean refugees with projects to create livelihood opportunities for refugees and host communities. Projects included granting access to land and crop production loans, seed distribution, microcredit schemes, as well as the upgrading of schools and vocational training centres, literacy and numeracy classes and vocational skills training. This initiative sought to end one of the most protracted refugee situations in Africa by transforming 12 refugee camps into Sudanese villages.

82. In 2011, UNHCR submitted close to 22,000 refugees from Africa for resettlement, and more than 10,200 departed to the United States of America (77 per cent), Australia (6 per cent), Sweden (5 per cent), Canada (4 per cent) and other countries. Most of the refugees submitted for resettlement were from Somalia (58 per cent), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (18 per cent), Ethiopia (10 per cent) and Eritrea (7 per cent).

83. During 2011, an estimated 1.7 million internally displaced persons returned home, mostly in Côte d'Ivoire and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Nevertheless, insecurity, lack of basic services and assistance in areas of return together with communal tensions and difficulty to recover land or property made it impossible for many to return.

D. Partnership with non-United Nations entities

84. Effective partnership remained the cornerstone of humanitarian response activities, in particular in emergencies. During the reporting period, the United Nations continued to work with governmental partners, national and international non-governmental organizations, as well as with the subregional economic communities, such as ECOWAS, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and the East Africa Community, and the African Union. UNICEF provided technical support to the African Union Commission for the organization of a pledging conference to respond to the famine in the Horn of Africa, which raised some $350 million.

E. Inter-agency cooperation

Transformative Agenda

85. Since 2011, the Emergency Relief Coordinator, through IASC, has been leading a review process, known as the Transformative Agenda, to strengthen leadership and coordination in the humanitarian response to major crises. This was triggered by weaknesses and inefficiencies in the international response to previous emergencies, and was a continuation of the 2005 humanitarian reform establishing the Humanitarian Coordinator system and cluster approach for internally displaced person situations and complex emergencies.

86. Under the Transformative Agenda, mechanisms have been set up for rapid deployment and support to various levels of leadership to enable improved collective action and coordination at the onset of a major emergency. The Humanitarian Coordinator will be empowered to take decisions quickly and

effectively in the initial period of the emergency, and accountability for the collective response will be clarified and strengthened. The streamlining and more strategic establishment (and deactivation) of clusters as the means for coordination has also been agreed, ensuring that national coordination mechanisms and leadership take priority. During the reporting period, the cluster approach was in effect in 19 countries in Africa.

87. In 2012, the IASC organizations focused on operationalizing the Transformative Agenda at the field level. They have prioritized the testing of the Transformative Agenda in South Sudan and the rollout of targeted components in Chad, Mali and the Niger.

IV. Conclusion

88. A succession of large-scale humanitarian crises in West and Central Africa and the East and Horn of Africa has characterized the reporting period. Most of the capacity and resources had to be allocated to immediate life-saving assistance, often to the detriment of more long-term activities and the search for durable solutions. While saving lives was the immediate priority, the importance of activities that give refugees and internally displaced persons a purpose and a future, such as education and projects that create livelihood opportunities and build self-reliance and resilience, should not be underestimated. At the same time, involving host communities from the onset in the assistance programmes has been key to foster a more favourable protection environment and for the viability of both temporary and long-term solutions. During the reporting period, the host communities, in particular in Liberia, Burkina Faso, the Niger, Ethiopia and South Sudan, were the providers of first resort, sharing their often insufficient resources with the new arrivals.

89. While important progress has been made to end protracted refugee situations in Africa, more needs to be done before the international community can consider the Angolan, Liberian and Rwandan refugees chapters closed. After cessation of refugee status, ongoing support is required to ensure that reintegration in the country of origin or local integration in the country of asylum will be durable and sustainable. At the same time, efforts need to be sustained to improve security and living conditions in areas of origin so that those who wish to return can do so in safety and dignity.

V. Recommendations

90. **The humanitarian crises that occurred during the reporting period were caused by a combination of factors, natural and man-made, including food insecurity, drought, violence, lawlessness and political chaos. I urge the international community to spare no effort to tackle the root causes of conflict and displacement, including by building resilience and the rule of law at local levels.**

91. **I also call on the humanitarian community to ensure that robust and well-coordinated contingency plans are in place to effectively respond to humanitarian emergencies, including those causing internal displacement and refugee movements.**

92. Refugee protection, through hospitality and burden-sharing, remains a reality in Africa, based on tradition and law. The increase in refugee numbers in certain areas and the pressure of mixed migration movements have, nonetheless, caused some Governments to adopt a more restrictive approach to asylum. I call upon African nations to renew their commitment to ensure that refugees can seek and enjoy asylum.

93. Humanitarian aid is crucial in the first stages of an emergency, but every effort should be made to make sure that displaced people can re-establish peaceful and productive lives and do not remain dependent on aid and in protracted displacement. I encourage States to reconsider encampment policies and to lift reservations to the 1951 Refugee Convention that restrict freedom of movement and access to education and gainful employment. Furthermore, I encourage Governments and development and humanitarian agencies to work closely together to support countries in the aftermath of conflict in developing and implementing durable solution strategies for returning refugees and internally displaced persons.

94. The African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa is a groundbreaking legal instrument. Once entered into force, the Kampala Convention will reinforce and consolidate the key international human rights and humanitarian standards which underpin it, including those drawn from the 1998 Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. I urge African Union member States that have not yet done so to sign, ratify and deposit the instrument of accession to the Kampala Convention. I also encourage the Member States that have ratified the Convention to fully implement it in domestic law.

95. Furthermore, I encourage African States that have not yet done so to consider accession to the 1954 and 1961 Statelessness Conventions. States are encouraged to work with the relevant United Nations organizations to identify stateless populations on their territory and to review their legislation with a view to eliminating gaps that can cause or perpetuate statelessness.

96. States outside Africa are called upon to continue to support African States' long-standing and substantial efforts to meet the immediate and long-term needs of displaced populations, notwithstanding the global financial crisis. International cooperation, solidarity and responsibility-sharing must remain key principles of the entire international community. Their full respect is essential to ensure that host Governments and communities, and national and international humanitarian and development organizations, have adequate resources to respond to displacement emergencies, immediately and in the search for durable solutions.

97. Finally, I call on State and non-State parties to conflict to comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law, to facilitate access by humanitarian organizations to affected civilian populations, and to ensure the security of humanitarian workers. I encourage all African States to ratify and enforce the United Nations Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel.